

1 OCT 1960

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director, Photographic Intelligence Center

SUBJECT: Geological Surveys in the USSR

REFERENCE: Your Memorandum to AD/IR and AD/SI, 19 September 1960,  
(PIC/D-109-60)

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1. [REDACTED] memorandum touches on a number of subjects that are receiving increasing attention in the intelligence community as the Soviet Government expands its programs in the field of earth sciences.

2. These Soviet programs include not only geological investigations but certain aspects of gravimetry which are directly related to improving long-range missile targeting. In a larger context, the article discussed by [REDACTED] emphasizes the serious implications that are inherent in long-standing Soviet objectives and systematic programs for the study of the earth as a whole. We have been following and reporting on these developments rather closely, with particular attention to the potential of Soviet foreign aid programs for development of geological, geodetic, and gravity data. The Soviet activity has a definite applicability to military capabilities, but we would hesitate to assign to the Balk Conference any specific implications for military planning. We see no reason to ascribe any sinister, aggressive motives to this regional scientific conference.

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3. Soviet geological survey teams have been active in Free World underdeveloped countries for many years, although it is true the USSR has greatly expanded its program in these areas in the recent past. There is no reason to assume that these survey teams have current or potential paramilitary characteristics.

4. In our view, the term "zakrytyy" is meant strictly in its technical geological sense as it relates to buried strata and structures, and has no reference to the Soviet political-security restricted areas. The Conference certainly underscores Soviet efforts to step up techniques and programs for geophysical prospecting.

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OAD/IR:OEG:the [REDACTED] am/8895 (3 Oct 1960)

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